



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

775 Bloomfield Ave., Windsor, CT 06095-2322

(860) 768-1100 • Fax (860) 768-1108 • www.cfba.org

Testimony in regard to:

Governor's Deficit Mitigation Plan

Submitted by: Don Tuller, President
Steve Reviczky, Executive Director

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and members of the Appropriations Committee:

Connecticut Farm Bureau strongly opposes sweeping funds from the Community Investment Account (CIA) and strongly supports agricultural programs that are funded through the CIA.

Connecticut Farm Bureau urges the Appropriations Committee to protect the CIA and reject the redirection of funds now dedicated to its good works.

In 2005, for good reason and with much fanfare, the Connecticut General Assembly adopted and Governor M. Jodi Rell signed into law Public Act 05-228, the Community Investment Act. This was and remains landmark legislation that brought together diverse interests in a common cause to enhance the quality of life of citizens throughout Connecticut. The CIA established a fee on the filing of documents on local land records and dedicated the funding to enhance Connecticut agriculture, protect open space and historic assets and provide affordable housing. Through the CIA the State of Connecticut has been able to carry out meaningful programs and complete significant projects as was the vision of the members of the General Assembly and Governor. This has helped our communities and economy tremendously.

CIA funding directed to the Department of Agriculture has been put to good use to boost Connecticut agriculture:

- **Agricultural Viability and Farm Transition Grants**
- **Farmland Preservation Program**
- **CT Grown marketing**
- **Dairy Farm grants**
- **Farm Link Program**

More specifically:

- CIA pays for 3 of 5 staff in the CT Farmland Preservation Program and other expenses necessary to protect agricultural lands. The program simply cannot function without the staff and resources provided through the CIA.
- CIA provides \$1 million funding annually for the CT Agriculture Viability and Farm Transition Grants Program, \$100,000 annually for CT Grown marketing program, \$75,000 for the CT Farm Link Program. All of these programs support jobs and growth in the agriculture sector of Connecticut's economy.
- CIA funds are a vital source of dairy support that helps maintain an industry that represents an estimated \$1.1 billion in economic activity annually, 4,000 jobs and over 70,000 acres of farmland in active agricultural use.

Department of Agriculture programs funded through the CIA have not only contributed significantly to protect a critical agricultural land base for future generations but have had a meaningful and lasting impact on agricultural viability in our state, creating and maintaining local jobs.

Connecticut Farm Bureau strongly urges you to reject a sweep of the Community Investment Account and protect its contributions to the economy and Connecticut agriculture.